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MUSE 356- Choral Methods

Citation

Article #3- Education Research: Practical Implications for the Rehearsal
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Summary

The sequential teaching unit that is described is the direct instruction cycle. That is, presentation by the teacher, student interaction with task, and teacher feedback. This cycle has benefitted not only music classrooms, but also Mathematics and English classrooms as well. The first part of the sequence can be delivered in a variety of ways. These forms are by academic musical task presentation, directions, social task presentation, questioning, and off-task statements. The second part is student interaction, and can happen in a variety of ways as well. These responses can be by performing, nonsinging verbal, or nonverbal responses. The final part, teacher feedback, can come through many different responses. These responses are approving or disapproving, verbal or nonverbal, and academic or social. It is important for the teacher to direct the feedback to the task being done. This cycle can be done improperly and not fulfilled when teachers present it, students perform, and then the teacher stops the students for something other than that which they were focusing on, so the task isn't completed. Another way this task can be harmful to the learning of students is when the teacher gives a long list of other instructions and disrupts the flow of the instruction cycle.

There were three organizational sequences that choral directors can follow. The first was starting and ending the rehearsal with familiar, enjoyable music, and in the middle section was slower and contained more detailed activities and presenting new material. The second sequence was very similar to the first one, but it was structured around a climax of intensity about two-thirds of the way through the rehearsal. The third sequence was intermixing familiar and difficult music throughout the entire rehearsal and changing paces regularly. All of the directors responded differently to each of these organizational sequences, and the students all had ways in which they enjoyed the way their directors conducted the classroom.

Conductor behavior plays an important role in the success and smoothness of the rehearsal. There are specific categories that are to be considered when addressing conductor behavior. Verbalization time is the amount of time the conductor is speaking to the students, not including the time singing. There are appropriate times for specific verbalizations, and students benefit from the uses of these. Classroom environment is the particular atmosphere that students are learning in and engaging in their music making. The magnitude of the conductor also plays an important role in how the students respond to instruction and their overall attentiveness when performing. Conductors give approval and disapproval comments, but these need to be used at the appropriate times and mixed. Students tended to respond better to those approval comments, especially when it is

constructive criticism and the teacher actually means it. The final concept in conductor behavior is that of relationships between magnitude, attitude, and on-task behaviors. Active student participation, complete teaching units, and a high conductor magnitude result in higher performance gains and lower incidence of off-task behaviors. This statement reflects the exact final concept that shows successful teacher behavior.

Discussion

This article had a tremendous amount of information for a future music educator like myself. It was intriguing to read about the rehearsal process, specifically the direct instruction cycle. I will implement this sequence in my classroom in the future, and keep in mind those disrupting factors to the process. I have experienced first hand the benefit this cycle has on a classroom and how, as a student, I felt in place and that those tasks we were doing were completed. I will also take into consideration the different organizational patterns, and try some of them out while a beginner conductor, but will lean toward the rehearsal design A that was most liked by those music educators studied in this article. I will also examine myself as a conductor and how my behavior will affect my ensemble. I will be sure that my verbalizations, classroom environment, conductor magnitude, conductor approval/disapproval comments, and relationships between magnitude, attitudes, and on-task behaviors are appropriate for my students to best succeed. I will reference this article to make sure I am carrying out my class correctly.